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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **ALIEN SMUGGLER SENTENCED FOR GUIDING MEXICAN NATIONALS THROUGH DESERT RESULTING IN DEATH**

**TUCSON, Ariz.** –The U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona, announced that on June 17, 2004, Rogelio Orozco-Molinero, DOB 06/22/79 of Mexico, was sentenced to 57 months in prison by U.S. District Judge David C. Bury in Tucson, Ariz. Orozco-Molinero was also ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$1,203.44 for the cost of sending the deceased undocumented alien back to Mexico for burial.

On March 3, 2004, a Department of Public Safety officer stopped a 2000 Chevy Suburban near Why, Ariz., that contained 11 passengers who were Mexican citizens in the United States illegally. Among the group was the defendant, Rogelio Orozco-Molinero. While these individuals were being processed at the Ajo Border Patrol Station, a separate group of undocumented aliens was also being processed after having been found by a U.S. Park Service Ranger near the Organ Pipe National Monument. Among the group that had been found near the Organ Pipe National Monument were four adults and a 9-year-old child. The adults told the park

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ranger that found them that one of their companions, a relative among their group, had died in the desert during their journey. The body of this individual was later located in the desert.

During processing at the Ajo Station, the individuals saw Orozco-Molinero and immediately identified him to an Immigration Officer as one of two guides who had led their group of 20 through the desert for about 17 hours. They stated that Orozco-Molinero and the other guide knew that the one member of their group was ill and that the guides agreed that he was not going to make it. The individuals stated that Orozco-Molinero told one of them, who was traveling with a child, to stay behind with the ill member.

When questioned by agents, Orozco-Molinero admitted that he was to be paid \$200 per alien to guide the group all the way to the highway where they would be picked up by two vehicles. He said that he knew that one member was unconscious and that he had left him with relatives with no intention of getting help for them. He stated that he didn't help the man and the others because he had told the family members that they could go to the highway and seek assistance themselves. The group was to go to a house in Phoenix before going to other parts within the United States.

On March 25, 2004, Orozco-Molinero pled guilty to seven counts of alien smuggling charges including one resulting in the death of an alien.

The investigation in this case was conducted by Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Border Patrol and the National Park Service.

The prosecution was handled by Raquel Arellano, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson, Ariz.

CASE NUMBER: CR-04-0690-TUC-DCB (JM)  
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